

***Erigeron howellii* Gray**

Howell's daisy
Asteraceae (Aster Family)

Status: State Threatened, USFWS Species of Concern

Rank: G2S2

General Description: Perennial from a rhizome, 8 to 20 inches tall, scantily short-villous under the heads. Leaves thin, glabrous, the lowermost ones with elliptical or suborbicular blade 1 to 3 inches long and $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 inches wide, abruptly contracted to the $\frac{3}{4}$ to 5 inch petiole. Middle cauline leaves ample, ovate to cordate, strongly clasping at the base; upper leaves similar but smaller. Heads solitary, the disk $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch wide. Involucral bracts loose, equal, glandular, somewhat herbaceous. Rays 30-50, $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 inch long, $\frac{1}{16}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ inch wide, white. Disk corollas $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long, more flaring than in *E. peregrinus*. Achenes mostly asymmetrically 5-nerved. Pappus of 20-30 capillary bristles.

Identification Tips: The only two other species of *Erigeron* that might occur within the range of *E. howellii* with which it might be confused are *E. aliceae* and *E. peregrinus*. *E. aliceae* can most readily be distinguished by its more elongate and hirsute leaves. *E. peregrinus* can be distinguished by its basal leaves, which taper to the petiole, and by its cauline leaves, which are rarely both thin and strongly clasping.

Phenology: *Erigeron howellii* flowers primarily in June. Flowering may begin as early as late May in some years and typically extends into July.

Range: *Erigeron howellii* is endemic to a very narrow range within the central portion of the Columbia River Gorge in Washington and Oregon. In Washington, it is restricted to Skamania County in the Western Cascades physiographic province. In Oregon, it is known from Clackamas, Hood River, and Multnomah counties.

Habitat: In Washington, *Erigeron howellii* occurs primarily on steep north-facing slopes at elevations ranging from 1600 to 3400 feet. The taxon generally occurs within microsites that have very little soil development and limited development of competing vegetation. The sites are essentially in a stable, herb dominated condition. Associated species include Martindale's lomatium (*Lomatium martindalei*), spreading phlox (*Phlox diffusa*), matted

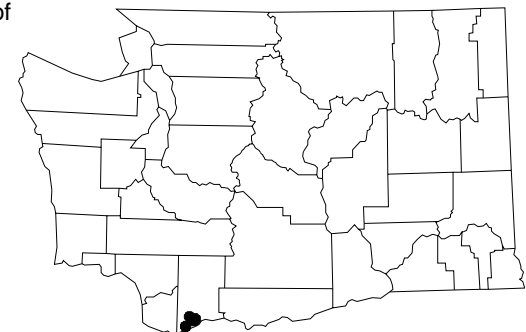
Erigeron howellii

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Known distribution of
Erigeron howellii
in Washington



● Current (1980+)
○ Historic (older than 1980)

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Photo by Reid Schuller



Photo by Reid Schuller



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Habitat (continued): saxifrage (*Saxifraga bronchialis*), western stenanthium (*Stenanthium occidentale*), Howell's reedgrass (*Calamagrostis howellii*), and Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*).

Ecology: The species is generally restricted to sites where established plants face little competition, but in which seedling establishment may be quite difficult. Portions of some populations may face competition from invading conifers, primarily Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*).

State Status Comments: The small number of occurrences, the restricted range of the species, and small population size all contribute to the species' status.

Inventory Needs: Additional inventory should be conducted within and adjacent to the known occurrences in Washington.

Threats and Management Concerns: Some populations may be subject to various land management activities, including timber harvesting and road construction. Recreational use is an increasing threat to the populations as the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area becomes a more popular recreation area.

References:

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, and J.W. Thompson. 1955. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest, Part 5: Compositae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle. 343 pp.